



State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

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Wisconsin tests 445,000 students as part of federal education requirements

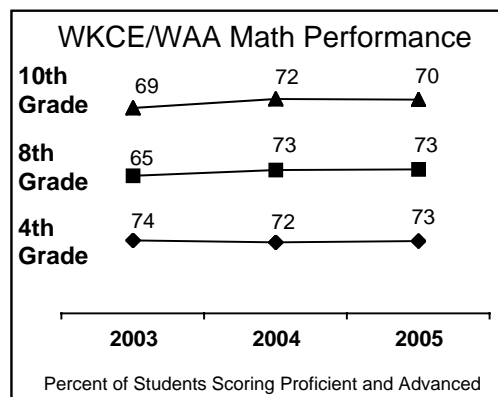
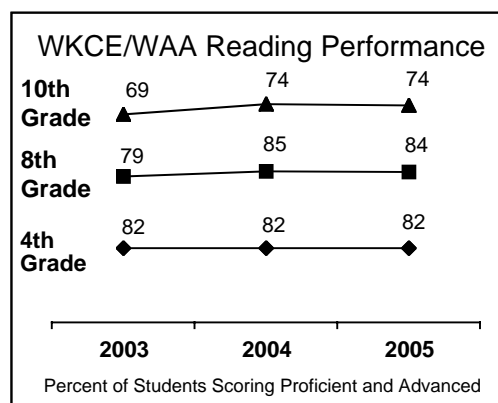
Student WKCE performance generally solid and stable, some closing of achievement gap at grades 8 and 10

MADISON—Overall student performance on statewide assessments remained generally solid and stable despite more than doubling the number of students participating in the first year of required federal testing of reading and mathematics in grades three through eight and once in high school. Of Wisconsin students tested, 31 percent qualified for free or reduced-price school meals and students of color disproportionately came from economically disadvantaged families.

“Wisconsin educators worked hard to develop and administer a testing program of this magnitude,” said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. “Every question for the new reading and math tests was customized and reviewed by Wisconsin educators. Test development over the past two years focused on ensuring that the tests reflect Wisconsin’s academic standards and are consistent for federal No Child Left Behind accountability reporting.”

The Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations-Criterion Referenced Tests (WKCE-CRTs) were administered in November 2005 to approximately 445,000 students compared to about 200,000 students tested

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in grades four, eight, and 10 in previous statewide testing prior to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act requirements. Nearly every student in grades three through eight and in grade 10 took exams in reading and mathematics. Students in grades four, eight, and 10 also took exams in language arts, science, and social studies, as they had in previous years.

As part of the new testing program's design, the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced in grades four, eight, and 10 for the "all student" group was matched to student performance in previous years for federal NCLB accountability reporting. Results overall were generally solid and stable. Fourth-grade reading held at 82 percent of students scoring proficient and advanced for three years. Results by subgroups are varied and do show some closing of the achievement gap in grades eight and 10.

Burmaster commended students for their participation and achievement in the testing program. "We know that poverty levels are increasing among our students and are especially high for children of color. The achievement gap is very apparent and closing the gap requires diligent effort. However, I am heartened that there was some closing of the gap from two years ago for students of color, economically disadvantaged students, and students who are learning English in eighth grade," Burmaster said.

Students Who Are Economically Disadvantaged
For Enrolled Students in Grades 3-8 and 10—2005-06

	Economically Disadvantaged		Not Economically Disadvantaged	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
American Indian	3,858	58.86	2,697	41.14
Asian	9,481	58.85	6,629	41.15
Black	35,156	74.00	12,354	26.00
Hispanic	20,290	69.10	9,072	30.90
White	70,058	20.12	278,085	79.88
Not Provided	4	-	24	-
All Students	138,847	31.01	308,861	68.99

NOTE: Economically disadvantaged students are those who qualify for free or reduced-price school meals.

A comparison of the percentages of students scoring proficient and advanced by racial/ethnic group and by English proficiency and economic and disability status from 2003 to 2005 showed improvements across nearly all groups for reading and math at grade eight. At 10th grade, the gap in the percentage of students scoring proficient and advanced closed in reading between American Indian students and their white peers as well as for English-language learners (ELL) and non-ELL students. In 10th-grade math, the gap closed between Asian and Hispanic students and their white peers and for students learning English compared to non-ELL students.

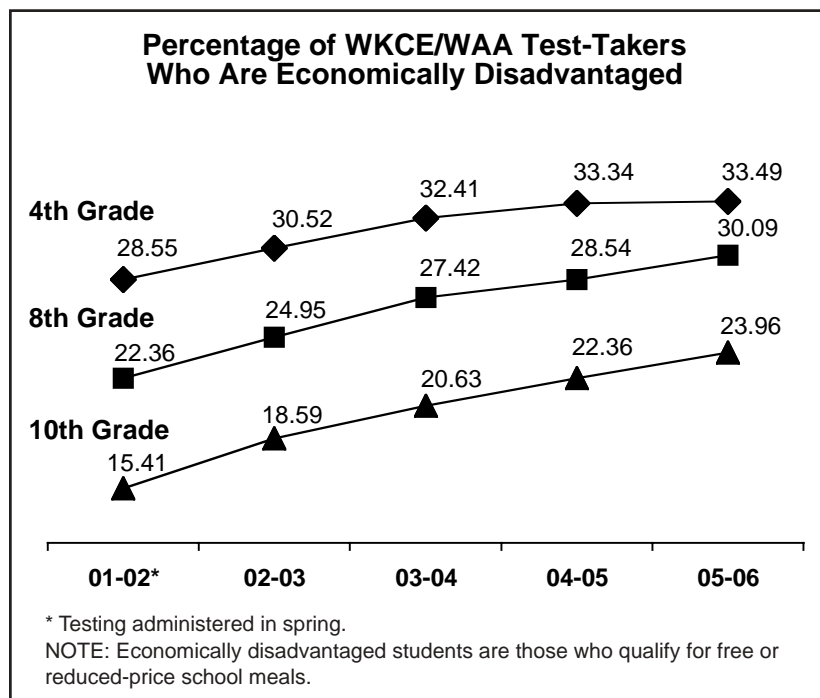
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Burmaster urged caution in comparing test scale scores or scale score averages from prior years to the 2005-06 data. Changes to the testing program necessitated a new scoring scale and required careful efforts to keep proficiency levels as consistent as possible with proficiency standards set by Wisconsin educators in February 2003. She explained that the scale score difference is similar to measuring temperature using two different scales: Fahrenheit or Celsius. While the numbers are different, the temperature or in the case of the WKCE proficiency levels, student performance, is the same. Results continue to be reported at four proficiency levels: minimal performance, basic, proficient, and advanced, with proficient or advanced the target achievement level for all students.

Assessments administered last November included the WKCE-CRT and two Wisconsin Alternate Assessments: for Students with Disabilities and for English-Language Learners. The WKCE-CRT was longer and required more short answer responses than students would have experienced previously in statewide assessments. Nearly all students were tested in grades three through eight and 10.

“School districts have continued their efforts to include virtually all students in statewide assessments,” Burmaster noted. “While large scale assessments have limitations, the information can be useful for parents, who receive reports on their child’s performance, and for schools and districts as a guide to improving academic instruction.”

The percentage of students who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals continued to increase. At grade four, 33 percent of students were from economically disadvantaged families, up from 29 percent five years ago. In eighth grade, 30 percent of students were from economically disadvantaged families, up from 22 percent five



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years ago; and at 10th grade, 24 percent of students were from economically disadvantaged families, up from 15 percent five years ago. Achievement gaps, measured by the percentage of economically disadvantaged students scoring proficient and advanced as compared to their peers, ranged from 12 to 32 points.

“The effects of poverty present challenges to students that often have them starting school behind their peers and can impair their learning while in school,” Burmaster said. “We can help offset those effects by supporting early learning opportunities through 4-year-old kindergarten and the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) program.

“Establishing a good foundation for learning has more of an effect on a child’s future than might be demonstrated by scores on statewide assessments,” she continued. “Day-to-day class work and regular assessment by classroom teachers give the best picture of student achievement. And, to be well-rounded, responsible citizens, our students need opportunities to demonstrate their learning through special projects; the technical, visual, or performing arts; or by developing leadership, cooperation, and other social skills that will help them succeed in the future.”

Results from the WKCE-CRT will be used for federal NCLB accountability purposes in the state’s annual adequate yearly progress evaluation. Schools and school districts will receive preliminary notification of their AYP status in mid-June.

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ATTACHMENTS: Tables with additional information about statewide performance on Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations-Criterion Referenced Tests for the 2005-06 school year follow.

NOTES: A paper on “Questions and Answers Regarding the New 2005-06 WKCE-CRT Tests, Scales, and Cut Scores” is available at < <http://dpi.wisconsin.gov/oea/pdf/q&a-sscrswlk.pdf> >. Data on school and district-level performance are available from local school districts and on the Department of Public Instruction website at < <http://dpi.wisconsin.gov/sig/index.html> >. Click on “Data Analysis.”

WKCE Proficiency Categories

Advanced	Students demonstrate in-depth understanding of the academic knowledge and skills tested.
Proficient	Students demonstrate competency in the academic knowledge and skills tested.
Basic	Students demonstrate some academic knowledge and skills tested.
Minimal Performance	Demonstrates very limited academic knowledge and skills tested.

**2005-06 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations and
Wisconsin Alternate Assessments**

3rd Grade	Tested WKCE	Tested with WAA for Students with Disabilities*	Tested with WAA for ELL Students**	Percent Proficient and Advanced					
				All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Reading	56,594	949	1,198	80	75	73	58	65	86
Mathematics	56,827	753	1,163	73	62	71	37	55	79
4th Grade	Tested WKCE	Tested with WAA for Students with Disabilities*	Tested with WAA for ELL Students**	Percent Proficient and Advanced					
				All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Reading	58,343	1,003	676	82	74	72	59	68	88
Language Arts	58,359	928	675	79	70	70	54	65	85
Mathematics	58,492	794	742	73	59	68	39	56	80
Science	58,636	587	735	77	66	67	45	60	85
Social Studies	58,619	589	741	91	88	86	75	82	94
5th Grade	Tested WKCE	Tested with WAA for Students with Disabilities*	Tested with WAA for ELL Students**	Percent Proficient and Advanced					
				All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Reading	58,855	970	562	83	75	77	59	67	89
Mathematics	58,905	822	608	72	60	69	37	52	80
6th Grade	Tested WKCE	Tested with WAA for Students with Disabilities*	Tested with WAA for ELL Students**	Percent Proficient and Advanced					
				All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Reading	61,658	857	480	83	73	73	56	67	88
Mathematics	61,657	798	533	72	60	69	37	55	79
7th Grade	Tested WKCE	Tested with WAA for Students with Disabilities*	Tested with WAA for ELL Students**	Percent Proficient and Advanced					
				All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Reading	63,706	899	469	84	77	74	56	66	89
Mathematics	63,681	852	516	73	58	69	35	55	81
8th Grade	Tested WKCE	Tested with WAA for Students with Disabilities*	Tested with WAA for ELL Students**	Percent Proficient and Advanced					
				All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Reading	65,335	920	450	84	75	77	56	68	89
Language Arts	65,138	904	447	66	47	49	36	43	72
Mathematics	65,302	890	495	73	56	72	38	52	81
Science	65,200	794	490	73	56	61	34	51	81
Social Studies	65,169	794	493	84	71	80	50	68	89
10th Grade	Tested WKCE	Tested with WAA for Students with Disabilities*	Tested with WAA for ELL Students**	Percent Proficient and Advanced					
				All Students	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White
Reading	70,434	788	551	74	60	60	39	51	81
Language Arts	70,049	791	542	70	48	57	38	48	76
Mathematics	70,395	788	569	70	51	64	28	46	78
Science	70,018	717	569	70	51	54	23	42	79
Social Studies	69,941	713	558	74	57	65	34	50	80

* Wisconsin Alternate Assessment (WAA) for Students with Disabilities.

** Wisconsin Alternate Assessment (WAA) for English-Language Learners (ELL) is a test for students who are ELL Level 1 or 2.

WKCE/WAA Performance by Racial/Ethnic Group for Three Years at Grades 4, 8, and 10

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced

4th Grade	All Students			American Indian			Asian			Black			Hispanic			White		
	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06
Reading	82	82	82	73	76	74	74	74	72	63	60	59	68	65	68	87	87	88
Language Arts	79	79	79	70	71	70	73	72	70	60	56	54	65	64	65	85	85	85
Mathematics	74	72	73	62	59	59	72	73	68	46	41	39	58	56	56	81	79	80
Science	80	78	77	74	69	66	71	65	67	50	41	45	64	54	60	88	86	85
Social Studies	90	91	91	84	89	88	87	86	86	72	74	75	79	83	82	95	95	94
Enrollment	61,581	59,867	60,136	899	838	867	2,130	2,143	2,269	7,248	6,706	6,538	3,914	4,299	4,539	47,235	45,865	45,922
8th Grade	All Students			American Indian			Asian			Black			Hispanic			White		
	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06
Reading	79	85	84	69	76	75	62	74	77	50	56	56	59	65	68	85	89	89
Language Arts	67	65	66	52	46	47	56	51	49	37	32	36	45	40	43	74	71	72
Mathematics	65	73	73	46	55	56	57	68	72	25	32	38	42	53	52	73	81	81
Science	69	73	73	52	57	56	48	54	61	26	30	34	41	48	51	78	82	81
Social Studies	84	83	84	71	70	71	74	75	80	50	49	50	66	66	68	90	89	89
Enrollment	68,409	68,061	67,003	1,024	1,053	1,029	2,332	2,411	2,284	7,014	6,945	7,285	3,429	3,739	3,988	54,393	53,895	52,415
10th Grade	All Students			American Indian			Asian			Black			Hispanic			White		
	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06	03-04	04-05	05-06
Reading	69	74	74	54	58	60	53	60	60	32	43	39	44	51	51	76	80	81
Language Arts	67	69	70	46	48	48	51	52	57	30	39	38	42	45	48	73	76	76
Mathematics	69	72	70	50	50	51	59	60	64	24	28	28	41	44	46	76	78	78
Science	70	70	70	51	50	51	54	53	54	26	27	23	42	44	42	77	78	79
Social Studies	73	73	74	59	56	57	63	61	65	31	38	34	48	50	50	80	80	80
Enrollment	70,543	71,231	72,876	998	1,034	1,043	2,285	2,369	2,582	5,851	6,130	6,642	3,115	3,301	3,552	58,010	58,363	59,050

2005-06 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examinations and Wisconsin Alternate Assessments

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient and Advanced

3rd Grade	English Language Learners	English Proficient	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged
Reading	57	82	50	86	65	88
Mathematics	54	73	48	75	55	80
Enrollment	3,778	55,065	7,769	51,074	19,990	38,853
4th Grade	English Language Learners	English Proficient	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged
Reading	56	84	53	87	69	90
Language Arts	53	81	56	83	64	88
Mathematics	51	74	48	76	54	81
Science	52	80	57	81	61	87
Social Studies	76	92	80	93	83	95
Enrollment	3,702	56,434	8,352	51,784	20,137	39,999
5th Grade	English Language Learners	English Proficient	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged
Reading	58	85	50	88	69	90
Mathematics	51	74	43	77	54	81
Enrollment	3,435	57,008	8,487	51,956	20,103	40,340
6th Grade	English Language Learners	English Proficient	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged
Reading	55	85	47	89	68	90
Mathematics	50	73	37	79	53	82
Enrollment	3,063	60,055	8,949	54,169	20,507	42,611
7th Grade	English Language Learners	English Proficient	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged
Reading	52	85	47	89	69	90
Mathematics	48	74	35	80	55	82
Enrollment	2,789	62,500	9,345	55,944	20,484	44,805
8th Grade	English Language Learners	English Proficient	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged
Reading	55	86	50	90	69	91
Language Arts	30	66	26	72	44	73
Mathematics	53	75	35	80	56	82
Science	40	75	40	79	54	83
Social Studies	59	85	51	88	67	90
Enrollment	2,591	64,412	9,608	57,395	20,162	46,841
10th Grade	English Language Learners	English Proficient	Students with Disabilities	Nondisabled	Economically Disadvantaged	Not Economically Disadvantaged
Reading	34	75	31	82	54	81
Language Arts	31	71	26	77	48	77
Mathematics	38	72	29	78	48	79
Science	30	72	33	76	46	78
Social Studies	40	75	34	80	52	80
Enrollment	2,365	70,511	9,744	63,132	17,464	55,412